

RICHARD J. MACK

▼ Obituary > Condolences

RESOURCES

- More Obituaries for Richard Mack
- Looking for an obituary for a different person with this name?



Richard J. Mack, 79, of North Brunswick, N.J., died on Friday, May 31, 2013. Mr. Mack was the only child of Emanuel (Manny) Mekanoff and Leah Braverman Mekanoff. His life will be celebrated in a memorial service at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, June 9, 2013, at Kirkpatrick Chapel at Rutgers Campus, New Brunswick. Born in the Bronx, N.Y., Richard's family moved early on to the New Brunswick, N.J./Highland Park, N.J., area. The Mekanoffs (later Mack) are three generations in the food, beverage and nightclub business in the New Brunswick and Somerset, N.J., area, beginning with One Eleven Wines and Liquors, Manny's Den, The Den and now Sophie's Bistro, owned by his son Peter Mack. Always a friend to the gay and lesbian community, the Macks were leading plaintiffs in a landmark state Supreme Court decision in 1967 that, in effect, legalized gay bars in New Jersey. The court reversed the revocations and suspensions of three New Jersey bars. The court ruled that homosexuals "had every right to gather in bars so long as their public behavior conforms with currently acceptable standards of decency and morality..." Details of this historic New Jersey decision were taken from Mr. Mack by the Rutgers Oral History Project. Richard M. spent three of the happiest years of his life at Solebury School in Solebury, Pa. He played varsity football and J.V. basketball. The Solebury yearbook stated that "what Dick lacks in height and speed, he makes up in hustle and mass." He went onto Washington and Lee, then Pennsylvania Military College (now Widner) from which he graduated. He subsequently went into the Army and Army Reserve, seriously considering a career in the military. Passing by Seton Hall one day, he went inside and impulsively applied to the law school which accepted him. His father became ill while he was a law student and he left school to help his father and subsequently take over the family business, Manny's Den, which he expanded when the business moved to Hamilton Street in Franklin Township, N.J. This is a decision he never regretted and he spent the rest of his life working in the business and later for his son, Peter Mack at Sophies Bistro. He was a longtime member of the Rotary Club of New Brunswick to which he gave much of his time and energy. Richard was much loved in the community and by his family for his generosity and good humor. Richard is survived by his wife, Cynthia Brockett and children, Peter Mack and Randi Mack Gonnella and her husband, Michael Gonnella. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Franklin Animal Shelter, Franklin Foodbank (both of Franklin Township) or Elijah's Promise (New Brunswick).



Funeral Etiquette
 Expert advice on how to do and say something meaningful